

Tristram Shandy's
DESCRIPTION
OF
GENERAL ELECTIONS,
AND
Septennial PARLIAMENTS.

————— If, ye Pow'rs divine,
Ye rule the Movements of this nether World,
And bring 'em to Account; crush, crush those Vipers,
Who, singled out by a Community
To guard their Rights, should for a Grasp of Ore,
Or paltry Office, sell 'em to the Foe.

MAHOMET.

Proper to be read by every one in IRELAND
at this Juncture.

D U B L I N:

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INTRODUCTION.

I HAVE read with as much Pleasure as Profit, a most extraordinary Performance, entitled, *The Case of IRELAND* in 1762. *What the Author means, besides Abuse of a worthy Prelate, I know not. His Style, his Argument, his Design,——— all, all are unfathomable. When he writes again, let him put on his Spectacles, and remember, that if he is a JUDGE of some Things, he is a bad one of the Subject he treats of.*

I PUBLISH the following Work, written by myself, that the Advocates for Septennial Parliaments may see what they are so fond of.

Tristram Shandy.

Just Published, (Price 6d half p)

THE BATTLE of the
PLAYERS. Exhibiting the
CHARACTERS of all the *Actors* and
Actresses on the *Irish Stages*. With
an impartial Estimate of their respective
Merits.

*Let Peals of Thunder, Codrus, round thee break,
Thou, unconcern'd, canst bear the mighty Crack:
Pit, Box, and Gallery, in Convulsions hurl'd,
Thou stand'st unhurt amidst a bursting World.*

 This Work has been so well
received by the Public, that up-
wards of Two thousand Copies have
been sold: And it may be looked on
as an absolutely necessary *Companion* for
every *Lady*, and *Gentleman*, that is a
Lover of *Theatrical Exhibitions*, and
would form a proper Judgment of our
Theatrical Performers.

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A LETTER to the PEOPLE of IRE-
LAND, On the Report of an INVASION
By the *French* and *Spaniards*, and their intended
Junction with the LEVELLERS.



A

DESCRIPTION O F ELECTIONS, &c.

CHAPTER I.

NOW it came to pass, that in the Reign of *George the Third*, there was to be a General Election of Men to sit in Parliament.

2. For at the Death of one King, and the Ascension of another, the Custom was of old Time so to do.

3. And behold, there were nothing to be seen and heard but Joy and Gladness,

ness, and Music, and Dancing. And Pleasure was in every Face, and Transport beamed from every Eye.

4. And exceeding great Feasts, and sumptuous Entertainments, were made by the Candidates to satisfy the Hungry with good Things, but the Rich were not sent empty away.

5. And the Candidates were all generous Men, and sought by Presents to the Voters, to relieve their Distresses; and by Kisses, and Embraces, and Presents also, to the Women, to gain their Good-Will.

6. Moreover, they were so lowly-minded, that they would shake Hands with a Cobler, embrace a Blacksmith, hug in their Arms a Tinker, and would cleave to the Breast of a greasy Butcher.

7. And when I beheld this, I said, Surely, these Men are exceeding good, and know that we are all Brethren alike.

8. For lo, they are not puffed up
with

with Pride; they consider the Poor and Fatherless, and give Money, and Victuals, and Apparel, to those that need them.

9. Moreover, they visit those in Prison, and take them from their Confinement; they heal those that are sick; and those that are broken-hearted, they comfort with some Money, and great Promises.

10. And at this Time, Houses were opened, where those that were hungry or thirsty, might eat and drink of the Dainties of the Land. And they met in great Multitudes; but did eat and drink so largely, that their Stomachs could not contain it: And the Floors, and the Streets, did bear Witness to their Shame.

11. And behold, as Money was distributing to the Poor, a poor Man did approach, and say unto one of the Candidates, Give me also Money, as thou givest unto those, for I want it as much.

12. And

12. And the Candidate said unto him, Hast thou a Vote, or Interest? And he answered and said, I have not a Vote or Interest. Then said the Candidate, I will then give thee no Money.

CHAPTER II.

NOW when I heard these Words, I marvelled, and pondered in my Mind, what the Meaning of them might be.

2. For I knew not then, but that all the Poor were to be relieved by the generous and lowly-minded Candidates, who did associate with Tinkers, and Cobblers, and Butchers, and Blacksmiths.

3. And soon after these Feasts, the Election came on.

4. And Men of all Ranks and Professions, attended a certain large Room, to declare whom they would elect to represent them: For it seemeth, that
the

the Reason of their doing so was, it was found inconvenient for all the People to assemble together, to transact their public Business, and therefore they chose a few wise Men to act for them.

5. And those of the Candidates who were chosen, did rejoice with exceeding great Joy; but Sorrow and Despair sat on the Countenances of those that were not chosen.

6. And I said to one of these, Why art thou sad?

7. And he answered and said, Because I am not elected; and have spent all my Money for nought. Verily, this Thing disquieteth me sore; yea, it vexeth my very Soul.

8. And I turned from him, and said to one of the others, Thou dost rejoice, my Friend; yea, thy Soul seemeth right glad that thou art chosen. Tell me now, I pray thee, if thine Office be a profitable one?

9. And he answered and said unto me, It is not a profitable Office, for I
D receive

receive no Money from it; and 'though I have many Children, and only a small Fortune, yet I expended some Thousands to acquire it.

10. Now when he had spoken these Words, I was astonished, and said, Verily, these M..... of P..... are right honest Men, and in their Minds is no Deceit; for lo, they spend vast Sums of Money, that they may have the Honour to do Good to their Country.

11. But I quickly changed my Opinion, for I found it was false.

12. I found that many of those Men that were chosen, were Caitiffs, and of the Number of the Wicked; that instead of acting like good and wise Men, promoting the Interest of their Country, and the Good of their Electors, they did betray the one, and disregard the other.

CHAPTER III.

AND behold, on the seventh Day after the Election, one of the Electors came to the Member that was chosen, and said unto him ;

2. Knowest thou not, O CHARLES CLYSTER-PIPE, that I was of great Service, in recommending thee to my Friends, as a wise Man, and a great Orator ?

3. And rememberest thou not, that thou didst declare, both by thy Speeches, and thy Writings, that if thou wert chosen, thou wouldst perform great Things for the Service of thy Country, and wouldst always oppose *Ermined Villains*, *Aldermanic Tyrants*, and wicked Traytors in *Parlement* ?

4. And saidst thou not that thou wouldst do great Things for me, in Consideration of my Services ?

5. I pray thee now, lend me ten Yellow-Boys ; give me some Franks ;
and

and oppose every Measure that is hurtful to this Kingdom.

6. And the Great Man looked with Amazement on the Suppliant, and cast an Eye of Anger and Disdain at him.

7. And for a long Time, he was so filled with Wrath he could not speak; but the Fire kindled within him, and at the last he spake with his Tongue.

8. What art thou, Man, that presumest to talk so familiarly with me, of my Promises and Declarations before I was chosen?

9. Thinkest thou that I am a Madman, to part with my Money? A Knave, to lessen the Revenue of the Post-Office by giving Franks? Or a Fool, to perform Promises I can get much Treasure for breaking?

10. Go thy Ways, or peradventure, it will be the worse for thee; for if thou provokest me, my Servants shall bind thee Hand and Foot, and toss thee in a Blanket.

11. And

11. And the poor Man then went his Way forrowing; and he wiped the big Tears that flowed amain down his aged Cheeks, and in the Bitterness of his Soul, he said;

12. Ill Luck and Misery ever attend him, who talks much and performs little; who speaks like a Patriot, and acts like a Knave; who appears as a Saint, but is really a Sinner. May such Men never thrive; may they drink of the Cup of Wretchedness, and in their Adversity may there be none to pity them. And let all the People say, Amen.

C H A P T E R IV.

AND it came to pass, that after the Senate was filled, and the delicious Wine and Viands that had been bestowed on the People, were forgotten, and the Money they had received from the Candidates, was spent in Riot and Profusion, they murmured among themselves, and said;

2. O that

2. O that it was every Year as it hath been this; that we might eat, and drink, and be filled, at the Candidates Cost!

3. Then should we revel, and dance, and be merry, and get Money in Plenty, without Working, and without Labour.

4. Nevertheless, if once a Year were too often for this voluptuous Living, would it might be once in seven Years!

5. Then stood up a certain Alderman, an exceeding corpulent Man, whose curious Palate had been often regaled with many a delicious Custard, and whose goodly Belly had been often gratified with many a Fowl and Fish at Election-Entertainments.

6. And he hem---'d, and ha---'d, and spit, and stroaked his Chin, and looked wise, and then he said;

7. Verily, my Friends, this Affair delighteth me much. I would that Elections were more frequent; for then
might

might we feed on the most curious Fish that the Sea produceth, the choicest Fowls that the Earth breedeth, and drink of the finest Wine that the Hand of Man maketh.

8. And that it may be accomplished, I will desire a Friend of mine, who is a JUDGE ----- of these Matters, and some other wise Men, to write and speak in Favour of it; and by putting false Glosses on the Matter, and by the Force of their Rhetoric, they shall make it appear that frequent Elections in *Utopia* are necessary; that they are a Proof of the People's Liberty; and that they tend to destroy Bribery and Corruption.

9. Nevertheless, I must own, they have the contrary Effect: Yet we will so dazzle the People's Eyes, that they shall think black is white, and that Septennial Parliaments are for the Good of the Nation.

10. And when he had said this, he departed; and as he had promised, even

ven so did he perform. And the People were led away by Sophistry, and Delusion, and Error, and fine Speeches; and did at length really believe, that Septennial Elections would be for the Good of the Nation.

11. Howbeit, this was the Opinion of the Foolish only and the Interested; but the Wise and the Good hoped, there never would be Septennial Elections; as they knew they tended to the Propagation of Licentiousness, Luxury, and Perjury; to the Increase of Venality, Bribery, Corruption, and Party Divisions; to the Destruction of civil and religious Liberty; to the total Ruin of Manufactures and Commerce; to the weakening all moral Obligations; and to the Overthrow of Order and Government.

12. But notwithstanding all the Arts of Craft, and Practices of Iniquity, Septennial Elections have not yet prevailed in *Utopia*: And the Hope that all true Lovers of their Country, that
can

can discern her true Interest, entertain,
is, that they never may prevail. Amen
and Amen.

CHAPTER V.

AND it came to pass, that being ignorant of many Things I desired to know, I went to the House of a certain wise Man, to endeavour to reconcile many Inconsistencies and Contradictions I imagined I saw.

2. And chancing to meet with him at Home, I said unto him;

3. I pray thee now, my Friend, let us commune a-while together; and inform thy Servant of that which he longeth to know.

4. How cometh it to pass, that prudent and wise, and thrifty Men, will sell or mortgage their whole Estates, to obtain a Seat in P....., when, as they declare, no Profit ariseth to them therefrom?

5. And he answered and said unto
E me,

me. Believe not lying Spirits. They may pretend it is, that they may obtain their Country Good; but it is, that they may obtain a Place for themselves.

6. And I farther asked him, saying; And what, I pray thee, induceth a Senator to change his Sentiments; turneth a Hero into a Coward; a Patriot into a Courtier; the noblest Orator into the veriest Mute; and putteth an End to Speeches, which breathed the correct Elegance of a CICERO, and hurled the pointed Thunder of a DEMOSTHENES? And he answered, A Place.

7. And what, I pray thee, inciteth the Patrician to condemn Measures the Plebeian approved; to vindicate Actions he before blamed; and to espouse Principles he before abhorred? — A Place.

8. And what prompteth the great little Men to shift their Characters as an Actor shifteth his Cloaths; and while in the House they bawl for Liberty, they sollicit Slavery; and roaring for their Country's Freedom, they thereby lose their own? — A Place.

9. And

9. And what, my good Friend, stirred up the Oratorial Faculties of the *Cork S--g--n*, to roar for Patriotism and the Country Interest; and to rail at Pensioners and Placemen 'till he shook the Senate? ---- To be one himself.

10. And what induced other clamouring Orators to open their Mouths and to shut them again; and now induceth certain of the *Utopian* Senators, to declaim loudly against Treachery and Villainy, Tyranny and Slavery, and appear such Patriots, that they are ready to die for their Country's Good?

11. And he answered and said unto me, The Hopes of Places induce them to perform these mighty Things. And, my good Friend, lay this down as a certain Truth, established on a thorough Knowledge of the World, and confirmed by numberless Facts, That the Design of the *Utopian* Senators in their every Proceeding, is to drive through thick and thin by the shortest Cut, into the Road of Preferment, as fast as ever they can.

12. And

12. And behold, our Discourse here ended, and I parted from my Friend much edified, and went to my own Habitation; and being fatigued with the Labours of the Day, I threw myself on the Bed, and soon after fell into a profound Sleep.

CHAPTER VI.

AND about the eleventh Hour of the Night, being still in a deep Sleep, the celestial Spirit disdaining to repose in Sloth and Idleness with the corporeal Dross, I dreamed a Dream.

2. And behold, I thought myself in a Club of venerable Men, cloathed in exceeding good Rayment, and having such great Wigs, and solemn Faces, that I immediately said to myself, These Men are surely very wise.

3. And they smoaked their Pipes, and talked very little; nevertheless, much Smoaking making them thirsty, they filled the Glass often, and drank
Bumpers

Bumpers to the glorious Revolution in 1688, to the present Royal Family, to CUPID'S *Coal-hole*, to the *Female Chymist*, and to their own Healths.

4. And I said within myself, These Men are not so wise as I first thought them to be: For lo, they drink to each other's Healths so often, as will greatly prejudice their Healths.

5. And soon after this, much Drinking made them throw off their Reserve, and they were no longer Mutes, but Orators. And they sung bawdy Catch-
es, and told merry Tales, and hiccupp'd, while their Eyes sparkled with Joy, and every *Member* was in Motion, as seem-
ed to say, Now are we truly happy.

6. And one of them said to another, How much did thy Election cost thee? And he answered, It cost me two thousand Pounds; for I was obliged to give forty Pounds for a Leg of Lamb; 30 for a Pair of Shoes; 23 for a Wig; 19 for a Hat; and 53 for a Book against Bribery and Corruption. But what vex-
ed

ed me most of all was, I was obliged to give ninety seven Pounds to the Parson of the Parish for an old Bible.

7. Thou wast not, said another, so badly treated as I was; for 'though I was elected by *free* and *independent* Electors, my Election cost me three thousand Pounds in ready Money, and two thousand in Notes, which I never intend to pay.

8. I played my Cards well, said a meagre-looking Man, with Spindle Legs; for I laid a Wager of a cool Thousand with the Landlord of a Borough, that I should not be elected; and behold, I lost my Wager, and gained my Election. Thus saying, he fell back in his Chair, and with ghastly Grin smiled his own Applause.

9. But all this signifies nothing, said a little dapper Fellow, with a rotund Belly: Have you got, or do you want *Places, Pensions, or Money?*

10. I want a Place, said one; I want a Pension, said another; I want Money,

Money, said a third; I want all, said a fourth; I want a Title, said a fifth; I bawl for Freedom and Liberty; I roar for Patriotism and the Country Interest; I harangue for Septennial Parliaments; I speak for Commerce; I oppose the Court; I decry Venality; I call ——— Here the Noise was so loud, that behold, I awaked, and found it was only a Dream.

11. And in the Instant of my awaking, I saw a grim-looking Man, whom they call a Catchpole, standing before me; and he caught me by the Shoulder, and said, Thou art my Prisoner.

12. And I had a Mind to have pulled off my Shirt, as on a similar Occasion TOM ECHLIN once did, and like him, say unto him, If thou hast an Action against me, thou hast none against my Cloaths, and thereby have forced the Catchpole to depart; but he made me put on my Cloaths, and then by main Force dragged me along with him, and cast me into the
Black

Black Dog Prison; for I could neither
get Bail for the Debt, nor soften my
Cerberus by throwing him a Sop.

Here endeth
my true Description of
ELECTIONS,
and MEMBERS.

With the Arms of the *Shandean Family*,
engraved by me,

Tristram Shandy.



